

# THE CITY OF SALFORD SEE YOUR CITY

A REVIEW OF POST-WAR PROGRESS



COVER: *Only by reaching for the sky was it possible to house more than 700 families on the site at Lower Kersal.*

1941 . . . and the words 'Post-War' only a hope.



**L**OCAL Government is a rather dreary-sounding title for what is, in fact, a vitally interesting and important subject. It describes the system used, in a democratic country, to provide nearly all the most important benefits of modern civilisation.

Sometimes people talk in an ironic way of 'the marvels of modern civilisation' when they are discussing such frightening aspects as hydrogen bombs or guided missiles. Local Government has nothing to do with these things. It concerns itself only with those matters which contribute to the health, safety and well-being of the men, women and children in a community.

To care for the young, the disabled and the aged ; to provide decent homes for those who need them ; to supply the civilised necessities of clean water, sanitation and good roads—these are the tasks of civilisation. It can in truth be said that we are served by local government throughout our lives, from the ante-natal clinic to the municipal cemetery or crematorium.

If anyone in an English industrial city wants to assess the value of local government he can do so best by recalling life as it was in the few days after a wartime blitz. Blocked roads and no transport ; no light, heat or power ; schools and clinics closed ; homes demolished by blast, or cordoned off by bomb disposal squads. For a brief period we saw a community without its local government services. Yet, in normal times, we take them all for granted, and our only comment is one of complaint or criticism whenever 'They'—that general term for the Corporation—fall in any way short of our ideas of service. Nor will we be content if that service is static and unchanging. We demand that our city shall move with the times, shall be ready to adopt modern techniques, and, in addition, shall plan for a future which stretches beyond our own lifetime.

In a democracy, it is wholly right that the public should be critical and demanding, for, after all, a people gets the government it deserves. But the men and women who operate local government, as councillors or as officials, are entitled to hope that their critics shall be sufficiently well-informed to make their comments realistic. Any move, therefore, which gives the ordinary citizen a clearer insight into the aims and methods of local government in his neighbourhood must be to the ultimate benefit of the community. The purpose of this booklet is to supplement the programme of visits which has been arranged by the City of Salford during the last week of July 1961. A number of typical examples of post-war development may be inspected by citizens and, in the following pages, it is the intention to illustrate these, and others, and to give a few of the salient facts relating to each project.

AT THE end of the war, Salford, like many other industrial cities, faced an almost heartbreaking list of tasks to be done. The departments dealing with housing, education and public works had a backlog of six years postponed maintenance. In the early years of the war 1,972 homes had been destroyed or damaged beyond repair and over 28,000 had been damaged to a lesser extent. The schools also had suffered in the blitz yet the demands in 1945 for both houses and schools were even greater than they had been in 1939.

Nor was it enough to tackle the problem as it existed at the moment. The national and local birthrate rose steeply in the years immediately after the war and plans for houses and schools had to take into account the possibility of an increase in population and, more certainly, in the number of schoolchildren who would, from 1950, need accommodation.

*The layout of a housing estate should take into account the trees already there. At Fairhope the results justify the planner's care.*



ANOTHER factor which complicated the housing problem was the desperate shortage of land suitable for development. There were, however, a few sites available, so a start could be made. On the Fairhope Estate 180 homes were built, at Ladywell 279, at Southgarth 142, and, more recently, 711 flats at Lower Kersal.

There were a few remaining sites which had not been built on in the past because development would have been too costly. Now, with land so scarce, it became economic to use some of these sites for multi-storey blocks of flats. Clement Attlee House, an 8-storey block of flats completed in 1956 is a typical instance. This site would have accommodated only twenty-four families in 2-storey houses but, by building high, it has been possible to provide 110 flats. Here we can see the pattern of the future, for Salford is a densely populated city with many streets of small houses. If Salford's citizens are not to be deported wholesale as 'overspill' to other

areas, the only alternative is to replace the many small out-of-date houses with lofty blocks of flats of eight, eleven and even fifteen floors.

When large numbers of people are accommodated in high blocks of flats, they require many special services which are unnecessary in ordinary houses. Care has therefore been taken, in the planning of the flats, to provide adequate lifts, heating, refuse disposal, and fire-fighting equipment. In those flats which have already been completed the method of heating has been by means of open fires, but in the flats which are now under construction, alternative methods of space heating will be employed, including oil-fired hot water central heating and electric under-floor heating.

The planning of the open spaces surrounding lofty blocks of flats is almost as important as the services and amenities inside them. In the earlier housing schemes, by careful planning, it was possible to preserve many existing trees and this greatly contributed to their present attractive appearance. The clearance sites now being developed are, of course, devoid of trees, but, when building is completed, the Corporation will plant well-established forest trees in selected places.

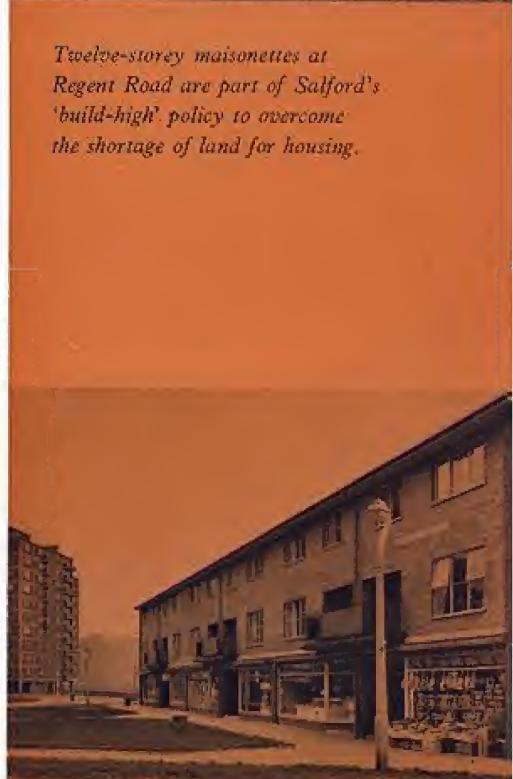
Where necessary, suitable shopping facilities are provided alongside housing development. A new shopping centre is to be built adjoining the 12-storey maisonettes on Regent Road. It will be essentially a pedestrian area where shoppers will be able to walk around the paved squares in complete safety away from the bustle of the traffic. A car park will be sited close to the shops for the convenience of motorists.

In view of the large amount of clearance work necessary before new building can commence, it has not been possible to rehouse all citizens within the city, and therefore an overspill housing scheme has been built at Worsley. The number of homes completed to date is almost 3,000 and the scheme, when completed, will accommodate nearly 4,500 families.

A huge programme of building involving the expenditure of millions of pounds over the years obviously demands the closest scrutiny of costs. Salford City Council have felt that the most certain way of ensuring that truly competitive tenders are received from contractors is for the Corporation to set up a Direct Labour Building Department which tenders in competition with outside contractors. The Department has already successfully completed five major contracts and has many more in progress.



*Twelve-storey maisonettes at Regent Road are part of Salford's 'build-high' policy to overcome the shortage of land for housing.*



*In Lower Kersal, the 'little shop round the corner' is replaced by the 'shops down below'.*



*The bronze peacock at Ordsall Girls' Secondary School is such a favourite with the girls that it has been adopted as the school badge.*

THE problems which faced education authorities at the end of the war, though not so obviously urgent as those of housing, were, nevertheless, enough to daunt the faint-hearted.

Even before the war was over, Parliament had passed a new Education Act which manifestly entailed a huge school-building programme. The school-leaving age was raised to 15 with a possibility of extension to 16. The size of classes was to be reduced and their number accordingly increased. Secondary education was to be free and universally available at levels suitable to each child's age, ability and aptitude. Special schools were to be increased, the school meals and free milk schemes extended and the school medical service strengthened. Plans were announced for an entirely new approach to day-time and evening education for school leavers. New building standards were laid down for schools, demanding larger sites, more playing fields and improved amenities.

At a time when cement, steel and even bricks were rationed, and when building labour was in the fullest demand for housing and industrial reconstruction, all these proposals may have appeared somewhat unreal. But, in common with many other Northern cities, Salford faced them with resolution.

As an immediate step, some prefabricated buildings were used; then, as building materials became more generally available, a start was made on a task which must inevitably take a generation to complete.

The degree of success can be measured as one tours the city. With the City Council and the Churches working in close co-operation, the following completely new schools have been completed since the war.

- 6 Primary Schools
- 1 Grammar School for Boys
- 6 Secondary Modern Schools
- 1 Open Air School
- 1 School for Slow Learners

Many other schools are at present being built, and by 1964 all Salford children will have Secondary Schools available—nearly all the places being in new, post-war schools. A new Technical College, a Technical High School, a Girls' High School, a school for acutely physically handicapped children, and other Secondary Schools will shortly be built. A programme of wholesale modernisation of Primary Schools is being started. The total cost so far is over two million pounds. When completed, the cost will be between four and five million pounds.



*School drama may sometimes produce actors and actresses; it always creates young critics!*



*At Hope Hall School keeping fit is fun . . .*

*. . . but at Cromwell School cooking is a serious matter!*





*To meet the increasing demand  
for technological education  
plans are in hand for the extension  
of the Royal College of Advanced  
Technology.*

**O**NE aspect of education of which the people of Salford are rightly proud is the Royal College of Advanced Technology which was officially opened by H.M. The Queen in May 1961.

Originally planned as an extension to the existing Royal Technical College, the building takes the form of an "L" shaped block with a large hall connected to the longer side of the "L" by means of a covered bridge. In 1956, the Government decided to regard certain Colleges as Colleges of Advanced Technology, and the Royal Technical College, Salford, was among the first eight of these to be so designated. This involved the shedding of all work other than advanced technology.

As a result, the original premises became the Salford Technical College, responsible for craft work, art, catering, textiles and the less advanced work in science and engineering. The extension built since the war became the College of Advanced Technology which is responsible for all branches of technology to university degree and post-graduate level.

**B**Y NO means all the post-war developments of Salford are capable of assessment in terms of bricks and mortar. The first years of peace saw a spate of social legislation which produced what is now often called 'The Welfare State'. The nationalisation of services previously under local control, such as Public Assistance and Municipal Hospitals, undoubtedly relieved local authorities of many responsibilities. But new duties were promptly thrust upon them and existing services were expanded.

The Children Act of 1948 brought into being the Children's Committee to care for all children who had no home or who, for other reasons such as the illness of parents, require accommodation and care for a long or short period. In Salford there are now nine modern children's homes including a residential nursery for children under 5. A reception centre to accommodate 20 children is to be built and will be the first in the North-West specially designed for this purpose. The Children's Committee is at present caring for 350 children of whom over half are boarded out with foster-parents and thus growing up in a family, rather than an institutional atmosphere.

The removal of the hospitals to national control has meant that the work of the Health Committee has developed more and more in the direction of preventive medicine. The Maternity and Child Welfare service has expanded ; the drive for smoke abatement has intensified and compulsory Smoke Control areas already cover more than 10% of the City ; the Health Visiting service has been widened to include specialised health visiting ; nearly all Salford school children are now immunised against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and polio.

New progress has been made in Mental Health with the development of adult and junior teaching centres. The Home Help service, now 280 strong, brings relief to the young mother or the housewife who is ill.

*The Health Visitor at the Baby Clinic gives friendly advice to young mothers.*





*Mass radiography detects unsuspected disease; prompt treatment can then produce complete recovery.*

*There is nothing institutional about the sitting-room in one of Salford's homes for the elderly.*

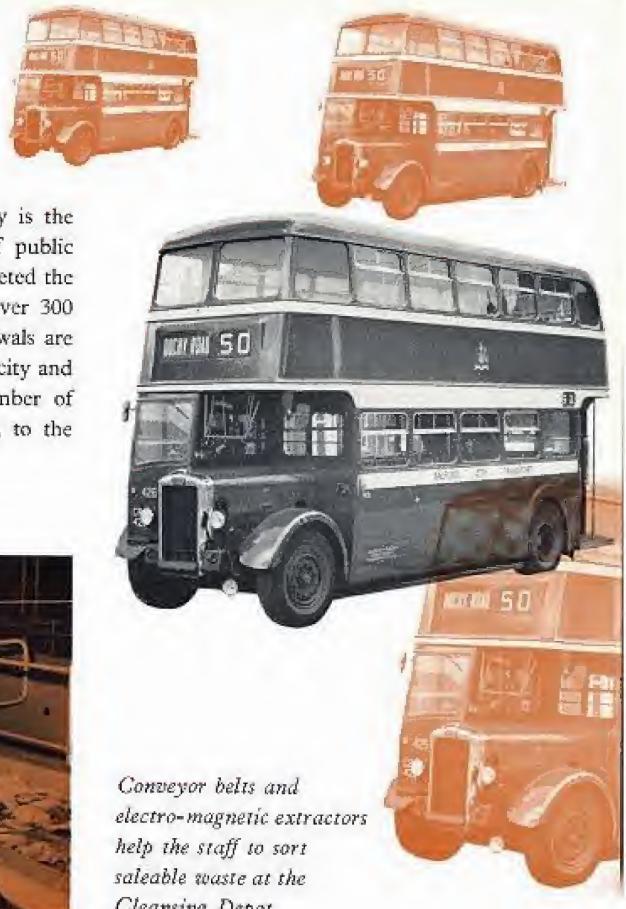
**S**INCE the war, the successes of preventive medicine and the spectacular discoveries in the field of antibiotics have had the effect of increasing the expectation of life. As a result, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of elderly people in our midst. It is the policy of the City of Salford that its older citizens should be given the chance to spend their later years in comfort irrespective of their means.

Wherever possible it is best for elderly people to live a normal family life. The Civic Welfare Department maintains a register of all old age pensioners and twice each year its officers visit the 17,300 who are living with their own families. Some elderly people prefer to live alone and these, some 2,200 in number, are visited every six weeks.

For elderly people who require accommodation and who enjoy the company of their own generation, Salford maintains one large and ten small homes where a total of more than 400 live in companionable comfort.

The Department is also responsible for the welfare of crippled and handicapped persons of all ages. For this group of 1,500 citizens, clubs are organised, special transport is arranged and, where necessary, accommodation provided.





**A**ND essential factor in the life of a modern community is the provision of an efficient and economical system of public transport. Since the war Salford City Transport has completed the changeover from trams to buses and the entire fleet of over 300 buses was replaced between 1947 and 1952. Further renewals are now being made. Services have been increased within the city and extended to outlying areas with the result that the number of passenger-miles per annum has increased by nearly 40% to the astonishing figure of 9½ million.



*Conveyor belts and electro-magnetic extractors help the staff to sort saleable waste at the Cleansing Depot.*

**O**NE important post-war development which attracts far less attention than the more spectacular projects of housing or education is the Wallness cleansing depot and refuse disposal plant. There is no glamour attached to refuse collection and disposal, but if every householder had the job of personally disposing of his own domestic refuse he would quickly be ready to pay a far greater sum than the cleansing department's share of his annual rate bill.

‘Waste not, want not’ is the obvious motto at the plant. Every waste product for which a market can be found is sorted, baled and sold to the financial benefit of the city. Trade refuse is burnt in furnaces designed to produce no smoke or smell nuisance.

The final unusable portion of refuse is tipped for the purpose of recovering land for playing fields or open spaces. Completed examples may be seen in Albert Park, Peel Park and Stott Lane; work approaching completion is being carried out at Rabbit Hills, Swinton and Pendlebury, and new work has commenced at Kearsley.



*At today's prices it's important that a pint glass should offer a full pint.*



**I**N A densely populated industrial city such as Salford the citizens need a wide variety of protective services. The first that springs to mind is of course the Police Force which by the prevention and detection of crime, the maintenance of the Queen's peace and the control of traffic, contributes to the security of law-abiding citizens and the discouragement of wrong-doers. The new Police Headquarters at the Crescent is an outward and visible sign of the growing importance of a modern approach to police duties. Only the interested visitor to the headquarters can appreciate the way the police now use modern technical developments in the fields of communications and transport. The day is past when the criminal could gain an advantage by crossing an administrative boundary. The integration and co-operation of police forces throughout the entire North-West region now means that a fugitive from justice finds every police force alerted long before he can reach its area.

Protection against fire is an obvious necessity in a modern city and this, like the police, is a service that can never sleep. For 24 hours each day, every day of each year, the fire fighting unit is on immediate call. In 1948 the Central Fire Station was modernised. Because of traffic congestion a new sub-station is now to be built at Higher Broughton. An active Auxiliary Fire Service of 85 men and ten women provides voluntary and invaluable support to the regular Brigade. Less spectacular than the fire fighting unit, the Fire Prevention Branch minimises the risk of future fires by its free service of inspection and advice.

Closely allied with the Police and Fire Services is the Civil Defence Service. The Corporation is responsible for organising and providing emergency services under disaster conditions. It therefore requires a Division of the Civil Defence Corps consisting of trained volunteers. Radiation monitoring and radio communications are two examples of unusual techniques studied and practised by these public-spirited citizens.

Less spectacular than some of the other protective services, the Weights and Measures Department provides a safeguard for the citizen against the dishonesty or carelessness of traders who would give short weight by inaccurate counter scales or sub-standard measures. The Weights and Measures inspectors even ensure that for your penny in the slot the weighing machine tells a true story—a vital matter to the feminine section of the community! Equally important in the eyes of many men is the fact that the Weights and Measures inspectors ensure that a pint glass holds not less than a full pint of liquid.



*Room at the top—for a man with guts!*

**A**MONG the Corporation's many activities there is a group of amenity services which cater for the mental and physical recreation of the citizens. The Parks Department has improved and extended many of the open spaces which are the lungs of an industrial city. The Department also contributes to the citizens' sense of well-being with its playing fields and its provision of pleasing settings to schools and housing estates.

The Baths and Laundries Committee has been carrying through a programme of modernisation and has a further 5-year plan which includes the building of entirely new swimming baths and public laundries.

Salford's Art Galleries and Museums are not content to be mere static repositories of permanent collections. At the Art Gallery, Peel Park, for instance, there is a full scale reproduction of an old street of shops and houses which shows most vividly just how a former generation of Salford lived. At the Science Museum, Buile Hill Park, there is a full-scale reproduction of a coal mine with old and new workings, together with press-button exhibits of many scientific aspects of everyday life.

In the world of books, the Library Department has greatly extended its services and buildings and almost monthly has to consider the purchase of reference books on subjects which were completely unknown to the general public as recently as 1946.

*"Buile Hill No. 1 Pit"*  
gives a true picture of conditions  
in old and new coal mines.



*The citizen who has read this report thus far may now have, possibly for the first time, an inkling of the varied activities of Salford Corporation in the post-war years. It is, however, hardly possible to convey the work that has had to be done in committee rooms and offices before any site could be marked out or any brick laid. The members of the City Council, working through their committees and sub-committees on an entirely voluntary basis, devote more time to their civic responsibilities than many businessmen— or even some national legislators. Their decisions entail a vast body of legal, financial and administrative work, the extent and importance of which is seldom suspected by the general public. Local Government seldom proclaims its achievements but the men and women who carry out its services are modestly proud of their contribution to the public good. At all times the citizen who is genuinely interested can be certain that his enquiries will be treated with friendly interest and lucid explanation, for it is a fundamental belief in local government that the business of a city is the business of every one of its citizens.*

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